(c) if so, the action being taken against the officials responsible for this delay?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI SURESH PACHOURI): (a) No, Sir. Comptroller and Auditor General of India has not conducted any enquiry into the pension authorisation functions of Accountant General, Uttaranchal as the pension authorisation work stands taken over by the State Government of Uttar Pradesh in batches from 1st August, 1985 much before the formation of the state of Uttaranchal with effect from 08.11,2000.

(b) Writ Petition No. 2757 of 1995 pertains to authorisation of pension to a retired Sanskrit Teacher. This is to be authorised by State Government of UP and not by Accountant General, Uttaranchal as work relating to authorisation of pensionary benefits of Education Department was taken over by UP Government w.e.f. 1st April, 1987.

(c) In view of the above, does not arise.

Concept of Poverty Line

4584. SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that while incidence of poverty from 1977-78 to 1999-2000 declined from 51.3 per cent to 25.1 per cent, the decline in number of persons below poverty line in absolute terms was not so marked, having come down from 328.9 million to 260.3 million;

(b) if so, in what way the concept of poverty line has undergone a change and the growth of population has come down during that period; and

(c) the targets fixed for the Tenth Five Year Plan with regard to the incidence of poverty and the number of people below poverty line and how far the same have been achieved by the end of 2004-05?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) Yes, Sir. It is a fact that while incidence of poverty from 1977-78 to 1999-2000 declined from 51.3%to 26.1%the decline in number of persons below poverty line in absolute terms was not so marked having come down from 328.9 million to 260.2 million.

(b) The Planning Commission uses a Poverty Line based on per capita consumption expenditure needed to attain a minimum amount of calorie intake out of food consumption along with a minimum amount of non-food expenditure in order to meet the requirements of clothing, shelter transport etc.

The Planning Commission, in 1977, constituted a Task Force on Projections of Minimum Needs and Effective Consumption Demand, which submitted its report in 1979. The Task Force (1979) defined the poverty line as per capita consumption expenditure level, which meets the average per capita daily calorie requirement of 2400 kcal in rural areas and 2100 kcal in urban areas along with a minimum of non-food expenditure. The Task Force used the age-sex-activity specific calorie allowances recommended by the Nutrition Expert Group (1968) to estimate the average daily per capita requirement for rural and urban areas using the age-sex-occupational structure of their respective population (as projected for 1982-83). Thus, to the extent the data permitted, the age, sex and occupational differentials in the daily calorie requirement of the population were captured in the average norms. The Task Force used the 27th Round (1973-74) NSS data relating to household consumption both in quantitative and value terms in order to compute the monetary equivalent of these calorie norms, which is known as the poverty line. Based on the observed consumer behaviour in 1973-74 it was estimated that, on an average, consumer expenditure of Rs. 49.09 per capita per month meets the calorie requirement of 2400 kcal per capita per day in rural areas and Rs. 56.64 per capita per month with an intake of 21m) kcal per capita per day in urban areas. Thus, the concept of poverty line used here was partly normative and partly behavioural.

The present method used by the Planning Commission for estimation of poverty is based on the methodology recommended by the Expert Group on 'Estimation of Proportion and Number of Poor' (Lakdawala Committee). The Expert Group, which was constituted in September, 1989 submitted its Report to the Planning Commission in July, 1993. A full Planning Commission meeting chaired by the Prime Minister in March, 1997 accepted the recommendations of the Expert Group with minor modifications. Since then the estimates of poverty at national and state level are being made using the expert Group methodology. According to this Methodology, Planning Commission

estimates poverty at national and state level from the large sample survey on Household Consumer Expenditure conducted by the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) at an interval of approximately five years. The latest such survey was conducted in 1999-2000 (NSS 55th round). The Expert Group did not redefine the poverty line and adopted the one defined by the Task force, which was at national level in rural and urban areas. The Expert Group estimated separate poverty lines for each state by disaggregating the national level poverty line.

The important points of departure between the Expert Group and the Task Force methodolgy are:

(i) Giving up adjustments of the NSS data. A high level of adjustment of a survey data distorts its basic characteristic. The difference in the level of poverty between the Expert Group and Task Force is largely due to the adjustment factor.

(ii) The Expert Group uses state-specific poverty lines as against a national poverty line for rural and urban areas.

(iii) The Expert Group suggested use of state-specific cost of living indices for estimating and updating the poverty line separately for rural and urban areas. The Task Force estimates are based on one national index, which is same for all the states and also for rural and urban areas. The Expert group methodology uses state-wise Consumer Price Index of agricultural Labourers (CPIAL) for estimating and updating the rural poverty line and Consumer Price Index of Industrial workers (CPIIW) for estimating and updating urban poverty line. The Government has adopted the Expert Group methodology for poverty estimation since March, 1997 as the basis for computing the official estimates of poverty in India.

The decadal growth rate of population has come down from 23.87 in the decade 1981-91 to 21.54 in the decade 1991-2000 according to the recent Census Report.

(c) In the Tenth Five year Plan, poverty projections have been made for the terminal year (2006-07) of the Tenth Plan. Consistent with the overall growth target of 8% per annum and its state-wise distribution as given in the Plan, the percentage of population living below poverty line

in the country has been projected to be 19.3% in 2006-07. There is no estimate of poverty available for the end of the year 2004-05, since the Planning Commission estimates poverty at national and state level from the large sample survey on Household Consumer Expenditure conducted by the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) at an interval of approximately five years. The latest such survey was conducted in 1999-2000 (NSS 55th Round).

Food and Nutrition Security Watch

4585. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Food and Nutrition Security Watch (FNSW) has been constituted in the Planning Commission for monitoring food availability and access situation in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of major food economy programmes which are likely to come under the scanner of FNSW?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) to (c) The Food and Nutrition Security Watch (FNSW) is being set up in the Planning Commission. It will bring under its umbrella major programmes on Food and Nutrition covering Public Distribution System (PDS), Food for Work, Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) and Mid-day Meals. At the end of the year, the Food and Nutrition Security Watch would bring out reports on these Programmes.

Reducing BPL People

† 4586. SHRI MANGANI LAL MANDAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a target has been set to bring 50 percent reduction in number of the people living below poverty line up 2015 in the country;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.